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torial regime of Getulio Vargas. One of the last of these was a son of the county who wished to leave a permanent remembrance of his family in the town. Most of the work was done by local labor, which brought a certain measure of prosperity to the town. Certainly the appearance of the town changed. New façades were added to many houses; others were freshly painted in gay colors; and some people constructed cement sidewalks in front of their homes. At night the streets are brighter because of the electric street lights (which are turned off at midnight) and because of the rays of bright electric light passing through the cracks of the closed window shutters and doors.

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Almost every evening at dusk, however, the electric power of the countryside is shut off for at least an hour because of inadequate generating facilities at the main plant, leaving the countryside and small towns in darkness. At this hour the town returns to its past, and one seems to be in an era one, two, or three hundred years ago. Tiny oil lamps (<u>filós</u>) are lighted, or an occasional kerosene lamp, the soft and short-reaching rays of which barely penetrate the heavy darkness of the house and do not reach the street. A hush falls over the town during the spell of darkness. All the old fears of shadows, malevolence, and <u>lobishomens</u> (werewolves) return. The family congregates in one room, for no one wants to be alone, speaking softly as though not to break the spell. The streets are suddenly emptied, and the silence is broken only by the occasional forlorn braying of a donkey left wandering outside.

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Without light there is no life in Vila Recôncavo. The evening religious service is delayed; the movie is delayed; the bar closes. One thinks of the impermanence of the new prosperity, remembering how quickly the moist salt air can blacken the gayest colored building, how the heavy rains can wash away the foundation of a mud house, how fast the weeds can grow in the cracks of the pavement, and how by the flick of a switch in some faraway place the magical lights are removed. A heavy gloom settles over the town and remains until, as suddenly as they went off, the lights return. Life picks up again, radios blare forth at fullest volume, and Vila Recôncavo once again is grateful for light and life, however impermanent.

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Although this is a traditional area, few local people know its history. Only a few can provide historical data going back further than one generation, and even fewer know anything of what lies behind the "glorious past" of Vila Recôncavo, a

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phrase one hears often but without further elucidation. Although there are many ruins of old town houses and plantations dotting the area and even the town streets, few people can tell anything about them or about their former illustrious owners.

217 Almost no historical documents can be found in the town, as most of the old records have either been destroyed by insects and dampness or burned at intervals when there was no longer room for their storage, or else have come into private hands in small quantities. Most clerical records of the convent and mother church of the parish have disappeared, although undoubtedly some are stored in church archives in Salvador and

[127] Olinda (Pernambuco). Some information was obtained from the office of the justice of the peace, where records go back to 1800 and consist mostly of testaments and inventories and records of a few lawsuits involving property, including slaves.

621 The community of Vila Recôncavo gives the impression of being a large private preserve. The town serves as contact

609 point with the outside. Although the inhabitants of the community frequently leave it for business or visits, it is seldom that a stranger enters the area. There are no facilities in the town or in the rural area to care for one who has no family ties in the community. Going along the roads of the community one can identify practically everyone encountered, if not by name then at least as to where he is from. The higher a person's position on the social scale, the more likely he is to be known by name to a great part of the community. Strangers are probably someone's guests. But the appearance of an unidentified person alone gives cause for speculation.

4: Pierson Z-4, 5 (1935-1937) 1967
SOll Bahia Brazilians SOll

in pigmentation. An able lawyer, with an extended period of practice in Bahia, he was well regarded by his associates.

At a formal dinner given by *A Tarde*, probably the most influential Bahian daily, in honor of a noted journalist and poet, 15 whites, 4 *brancos da Bahia*, 3 light mulattoes, and 6 medium or dark mixed-bloods sat down together at the banquet table. Among the guests, according to the account on the subsequent day, were "all the editorial writers and collaborators of this newspaper, together with a few specially invited friends and admirers of the honored guest [a white]."

Among the members attending a session of the Bahian Academy of Letters were 5 whites, 1 *branco da Bahia*, and 3 mulattoes. One of the latter is an able poet, quite dark, with kinky hair.

Present at a tea dance given by Bahia's Girl Guides at the exclusive club previously mentioned were the city's social élite, including the governor. *A Tarde*, in reporting the event, said, "As was to be expected, there was present our best society—all of it, almost—making the occasion one of elegance and distinction." Of the 414 guests, 346 were whites, 64 were very light mulattoes (exhibiting only slight traces of Negro ancestry), and 3 were dark mixed-bloods. One of the latter, with kinky hair but Caucasian features, was accompanied by a light mulatto wife, almost white, and two light mulatto daughters. One of the latter danced once during the afternoon—with a white youth. Of 30 Girl Guides serving the guests, 3 showed slight traces of Negro origin. The only blacks present were the members of the jazz orchestra (composed of 3 blacks and 6 dark mulattoes) and 2 maids who had accompanied white families.

The president of a literary, semiscientific, and social or-

[SALVADOR]

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*563 545 533 [204] society, has brought to Bahia the most famous musicians of our time. The newspapers and journals report the concerts that the white and colored artists give in the theaters and halls of the most important organizations of the city, and publish their /63/ pictures as well as the comments that the art critics make on the subject.

*563 •814 538 [532] [346] In the plastic arts, colored persons have not played an important role, although in the past they have produced some painters and sculptors of some renown whose works can be viewed in the most beautiful baroque churches of the city. These works are mentioned in the books on the art of Bahia, especially in those of a black or dark mulatto writer, Manoel Querino, son of slaves, whose studies on art, folklore, and Afro-Brazilian ethnography have made him famous. The first centenary of the birth of this intellectual, who in his biographies of numerous artists of Bahia only very rarely indicated their type, was solemnly commemorated in Bahia, as well as in Rio de Janeiro, at the same time that two other folklorists, who were white, one of whom was from Bahia, were honored.

*563 873 [875] In the school of fine arts of the local university, students of all types have acquired university degrees in architecture, painting, drawing, and sculpture; its teaching staff at present includes at least three mulattoes, two of whom are quite dark. Some informants say, however, that one painter, because of his color, was not counted for a prize offered by the school, consisting of a journey outside the State. This incident, which happened some tens of years ago, is interpreted in different ways by our informants.

*563 545 In the theater, colored persons (at least those who are very dark) do not have great possibilities, and one often hears this complaint expressed. The Blacks, says one young informant, never get beyond the stage of laborer or carpenter in our theaters; even for the roles of Blacks, disguised Whites are preferred. On the other hand, a morena amateur actress states that white women refuse to play the parts of Bahians and that they entrust these parts to colored girls. [873] It is also somewhat difficult to present white and colored actors together on the same stage, even in the theatrical

[SALVADOR]

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*563 872 572 565 In the public elementary schools the students, in general little conscious of their rank, have a tendency to mix indiscriminately. The informants in general do not recall discriminatory attitudes on the part of their white fellow-students and state /69/ that from these contacts result -- it is not uncommon to ascertain this -- close and lasting friendships. A woman of liberal profession established good relations with white colleagues of the upper classes during her school years, amicable relations that have lasted to this day. In working in the public schools of Bahia, a psychologist confirmed, however, that the children group themselves according to their physical type, but that they have a tendency to seek out in class children lighter than they as seatmates. It is understandable that in this phase of development and socialization of the child the latter has greater facility in identifying those of his group according to physical appearance, especially if he finds himself away from his family and is not influenced by the criteria of social classification current there. Even in the secondary schools, numerous informants say, the students group themselves according to their physical type, but especially in terms of social and economic rank; friendships between young people belonging to two extremes of the color scale are confirmed on each level; more rarely between different social strata. "The daughters of doctors, even if they are dark," a woman informant declared, "are treated with more attention by the professors and their companions than the Whites and the colored children who are poor." The relations between colored students and their Jewish comrades seem to be good, if one is to believe certain information.

*563 [217] In the libraries one can see students of very different types gathered around the same tables and working together. The colored students not only take part in groups on excursions, but sometimes are at the head of them; they happen to command their comrades of all types in the civic parades. A literary association founded by a black professor in a college-preparatory secondary school has white and colored members.

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The Academy of Letters of Bahia, an institution that groups Bahian intellectuals of the greatest renown, includes among its 41 founders eight mulattoes of the most varied shades of skin. One of them, an educator of repute, became a /87/ national celebrity for his works on Portuguese grammar and for the polemic on linguistic problems that he carried on with his old disciple Ruy Barbosa. Two mulattoes -- a very distinguished professor of medicine and another, both an engineer and historian -- were corresponding members of this famous association. Since its founding in 1917, the Academy has counted among its members 15 morenos and mulattoes; among them are names of which Bahia is justly proud. The group of poets and prose writers who,
[538] under the influence of symbolism, were originally part of an important literary movement was made up in large part of colored men.

/88/ Recreational Clubs

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The social and recreational clubs are the sector where admittance is the most difficult for persons of very dark color, if one is to believe the majority of informants. Some of them even declare that the obstacles that stand in the way of their entry into such organizations are due both to color prejudices and to the fact that these associations are dominated by the old families who resist the admission of members not belonging to their social and economic
[565] group. It seems, however, that even in the very select clubs of Bahia there are fissures in the class barriers: none of these clubs can keep itself strictly closed nor strictly aristocratic either from the point of view of the filiation of its members to the old families or from that of their color. And this so much the more because the founder groups permitted, not only finos Whites, but persons "socially white" or "white in color" (brancas na côr).